



# **WHAT ARE THE CATEGORIES OF TAWHĪD AND IS IT COMPULSORY FOR A PERSON TO KNOW THEM?**

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**Translated by:**  
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# WHAT ARE THE CATEGORIES OF TAWHĪD AND IS IT COMPULSORY FOR A PERSON TO KNOW THEM?

*By*

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# PREFACE

All praise is due to Allāh, may the peace and blessing of Allāh be upon His Messenger, Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم), his relatives, companions and those who follow his path till the day of resurrection. To proceed:

Knowing that Tawhīd is the fundamental principle of the beautiful religion of Islām without which Allāh won't accept any act of worship from mankind, it becomes obligatory upon the callers and students of knowledge to give great importance to explaining this great affair to the people so that they won't fall into the trap of Shaitān.

The scholars of Islām who are the inheritors of the Prophets have already explained everything that has to do with this important affair, what is left for us small students of knowledge is to bring these explanations close to our people by translating or commenting on the beautiful works of the scholars.

From the scholars of our era who gave great importance to explaining the affair of Tawhīd is Shaikh Abdul-Azīz Bn Abdillāh Bn Bāz (may Allāh be merciful upon him). I came across a very beneficial explanation of his on the Categories of Tawhīd which I translated on 4th of Shawwal, 1443AH corresponding to 5th of May, 2022CE. Here is the link to the original text: <https://bit.ly/3AeH2li>

Then some of our sisters who love to do good and aid this da'wah worked on it to bring it out and benefit the Ummah Ummah with it. May Allāh reward everyone with good in this world and the hereafter.

Written by:

Lukmān Bn Abdir-Rauf As-Sālafī

29th of Dhul-Qa'dah, 1443AH corresponding to 29th of June, 2022CE.

## Question:

From Libya, the questioner (Abdullāh) says: "Virtuous Shaikh, what are the categories of Tawhīd and is it compulsory for a person to know them?"

## Answer:

The categories of Tawhīd are three:

Tawhīdul-Ilāhiyyah (singling out Allāh in His worship);

Tawhīdur-Rubūbiyyah (singling out Allāh in His lordship); (and)

Tawhīdul-asmāi was-Sifāt (singling out Allāh in His names and attributes).

If a believer knows them even if he did not know the categories but he singles out Allāh and he believed that Allāh is his Lord and his deity and the one to be worshipped in truth and that He is the possessor of beautiful names and lofty attributes; He has no likeness and He has no equal. This is sufficient even if he did not know the categories but if he knows it (the categories), it is from good knowledge.

## **The first category is Tawhīdur-Rubūbiyyah (singling out Allāh in His lordship):**

This was affirmed by the polytheists. It is that a slave believes that Allāh is the creator, the sustainer, He is the one who created everything; He is the creator, the all-knowledgeable. He created the earth, He created the heaven; He created the Jinn, He created the children of Ādam and He created everything as He (Allāh), the Blessed said:

اللَّهُ خَالِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ

"Allah is the Creator of all things"  
[Sūratu-Ra'd, verse: 16].

The polytheists affirmed it. He (Allāh), the Exalted said:

وَلَئِنْ سَأَلْتَهُمْ مَنْ خَلَقَهُمْ لَيَقُولُنَّ اللَّهُ

"And if you ask them who created them, they will surely say: 'Allah' ".  
[Sūratu-Zukhruf, verse: 87].

And He (Allāh), the Exalted said:

قُلْ مَنْ يَرْزُقُكُمْ مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَمَّنْ يَمْلِكُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَارَ وَمَنْ يُخْرِجُ

الْحَيِّ مِنَ الْمَيِّتِ وَيُخْرِجُ الْمَيِّتَ مِنَ الْحَيِّ وَمَنْ يُدَبِّرُ الْأَمْرَ فَسَيَقُولُونَ اللَّهُ



"Say O Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم): "Who provides for you from the sky and from the earth? Or who owns hearing and sight? And who brings out the living from the dead and brings out the dead from the living? And who disposes of all affairs?" They will say: 'Allah'..."  
[Sūratu-Yūnus, verse: 31].

Meaning: They (The Polytheists) acknowledged that their Lord, Allāh, is the creator, the sustainer, the one who gives and takes life, the one who sustains them and He is the one controlling all affairs. The Polytheists affirmed this (Tawhīd of the Lordship of Allāh) but it did not enter them into Islām, i.e., this failed to make them true believers because they lack the second Tawhīd which is:

**Tawhīdul-Ibādah, that is singling out Allāh with (all forms of) worship:**

This is the real essence of Lā Ilāha Illa-allah and its meaning is: none has the right to be worshiped in truth except Allāh. It is the meaning of His statement (The Blessed) in Sūratul Hajj:

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْحَقُّ وَأَنَّ مَا يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِهِ هُوَ الْبَاطِلُ

"That is because Allah He is the Truth (the only True God of all that exists, Who has no partners or rivals with Him), and what they (the polytheists) invoke besides Him, it is Batil (falsehood)..."

[Sūratul-Hajj, verse: 62].

And the meaning of His statement:

وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ حُنَفَاءَ

"And they were commanded not, but that they should worship Allâh, and worship none but Him Alone (abstaining from ascribing partners to Him),"  
[Sūratul-Bayyinah verse: 5].

And the meaning of His statement:

فَاعْبُدِ اللَّهَ مُخْلِصًا لَهُ الدِّينَ

"So worship Allâh (Alone) by doing religious deeds sincerely for Allâh's sake only".  
[Sūratuz-Zumar, verse: 2].

And the meaning of His statement (the blessed) :

وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ

"And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him."  
[Sūratul-Isrā, verse: 23].

And the meaning of His statement:

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ

"You (Alone) we worship, and You (Alone) we ask for help (for each and everything)".  
[Sūratul-Fātihah, verse: 5].



This is compulsory. It is however what the polytheists denied, rejected and argued against. Hence there occurred between them and the messengers, enmity and rancour. And Allāh guided those He guided from those that happiness has preceded (i.e being destined) for and it is the faith that none has the right to be worshiped in truth except Allāh. This is the meaning of: Lā Ilāha Illa-Llah, meaning that "none has the right to be worshiped in truth except Allāh".

And He (Allāh), The Mighty and Majestic said:

وَالْهُكُمُ إِلَهُ وَاحِدٌ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ

"And your Ilah (God) is One Ilah (God - Allah), La ilaha illa Huwa (there is none who has the right to be worshipped but He), the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful".  
[Sūratul-Baqarah, verse: 163].

And He (Allāh), the Blessed said:

فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لِذَنْبِكَ

"So know ( O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) that, La ilaha illallah (none has the right to be worshipped but Allah) , and ask forgiveness for your sin".  
[Sūratu-Muhammad, verse: 19].

And He, the Mighty and Majestic said about the polytheists:

إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا إِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ

وَيَقُولُونَ أَأَنَّا لَتَارِكُو آلِهَتِنَا لِشَاعِرٍ مَّجْنُونٍ

"Truly, when it was said to them: La ilaha ill-Allah "(none has the right to be worshipped but Allah)," they puffed themselves up with pride (i.e. denied it)".

"And (they) said: "Are we going to abandon our aliha (gods) for the sake of a mad poet?"

[Sūratuṣ-Ṣāfāt, verse: 35–36].

And He (Allāh) said in sūratu-Saad about the disbelievers that they said:

أَجَعَلَ الْآلِهَةَ إِلَهًا وَاحِدًا إِنَّ هَذَا لَشَيْءٌ عُجَابٌ

"Has he made the aliha (gods) (all) into One Ilah (God - Allah). Verily, this is a curious thing!".

[Sūratu-Saad, verse: 5].

The Polytheists rejected this because they are used to the worship of idols, sun, moon and stars. The disbelievers are of (different) categories; the disbelievers of the Arab are used to worshiping idols, the dead ones, stones and trees. He (Allāh), the Exalted said:

أَفَرَأَيْتُمُ اللَّاتَ وَالْعُزَّىٰ

"Have you then considered Al-Lat, and Al-'Uzza (two idols of the pagan Arabs)".



وَمَنَاةَ الثَّالِثَةَ الْأُخْرَىٰ

"And Manat (another idol of the pagan Arabs), the other third?"

أَلَكُمُ الذَّكَرُ وَلَهُ الْأُنثَىٰ

"Is it for you the males and for Him the females?"

تِلْكَ إِذَا قِسْمَةٌ ضِيزَىٰ

"That indeed is a division most unfair!"

إِنْ هِيَ إِلَّا أَسْمَاءٌ سَمَّيْتُمُوهَا أَنْتُمْ وَآبَاؤُكُمْ مَّا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ بِهَا مِنْ سُلْطَانٍ إِنْ يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ وَمَا تَهْوَى الْأَنْفُسُ وَلَقَدْ جَاءَهُمْ مِنْ رَبِّهِمُ الْهُدَىٰ

"They are but names which you have named, you and your fathers, for which Allah has sent down no authority. They follow but a guess and that which they themselves desire, whereas there has surely come to them the Guidance from their Lord!"

[Sūratun-Najm, verse: 19—23].

Al-Lāt was a righteous man who used to pound flour for the pilgrims. He used to be good to the pilgrims, pounding flour for them. So they worshipped him (after his death) and (worshipped) the stone upon which he used to pound on.

And Al-Uzzā: (it is) a tree between Tāif and Makkah, they used to worship it. The Quraish used to worship and call upon it. There used to be some Jinn inside it, deceiving them and speaking from inside it (i.e the tree).



And Manāt is a rock beside qadīd on the route to Madīnah. The Ansār used to worship it, Al-Awas and Al-Khazraj (two tribes from Madīnah) and others also used to worship it. So Allāh revealed about it that which He revealed and He destroyed it.

And there used to be three hundred and sixty (360) idols around the Ka'bah when the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) entered it and Allāh conquered it for him, all (the idols) were around the ka'bah, from them was Habi, which they used to glorify. Abū Sufyān said about it on the day of (the battle of) Uhud: "exalt habi". The Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said to them, say: "Allāh is more Exalted and more Majestic".

He (Abū Sufyān) said: "we have Uzzah while you have no Uzzah", the Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said to them on the day of (the battle of) Uhud (to the companions): say: "Allāh is our Maulah (Master, Helper, Protector) while you have no maulah".

So these deities that they are worshipping beside Allāh are all false whether they are from tree or stone or dead ones or heavenly bodies or other than that. This is called Tawhīdul-Ilāhiyyah, it is the meaning of Lā Ilāha Illa-Ilāh and it is that which the polytheists rejected and they argued and fought against it and the Messengers came with it and called to it, He (Allāh), The Exalted said:

وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَّسُولًا أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاجْتَنِبُوا الطَّاغُوتَ

"And verily, We have sent among every Ummah (community, nation) a Messenger (proclaiming): "Worship Allah (Alone), and avoid (or keep away from) Taghut (all false deities, etc.i. e. do not worship Taghut besides Allah)."

[Sūratun-Nahl, verse: 36].

He (Allāh), the Exalted said:

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا نُوحِي إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاعْبُدُونِ

"And We did not send any Messenger before you (O Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم)) but We inspired him (saying): La ilaha illa Ana [none has the right to be worshipped but I (Allah)], so worship Me (Alone and none else)."

[Sūratul-Anbiyā, verse: 25].

It is compulsory with this Tawhīd to have faith in The Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and to testify that he is the Messenger of Allāh and the seal of the Prophets. This is compulsory and it is also mandatory to have faith in all that Allāh and His Messenger informed us of what has happened and what will happen.

Tawhīd (Monotheism) and Īmān (faith) can not be complete except with this. That is, it is compulsory to have faith in everything that Allāh and His Messenger informed us of, in the Qur'ān or the authentic Sunnah from the affairs of Paradise, Hell, accountability, reward, the bridge (that will be laid across hell) and other things.



And It is obligatory to have faith that Allāh sent messengers and He revealed books –as He has clarified in His Mighty Book (The Qur'ān)– like: the Torah, the Injīl, the Zabūr, the scrolls of Ibrāhīm and Mūsā.

All these are obligatory; that is: (having faith) in everything which Allāh and His Messenger informed us of.

### **The third (category) of Tawhīd:**

Tawhīdul-Asmāi was-Sifāt refers to having faith in all that Allāh and His Messenger informed us of about His names and attributes. It is obligatory to have faith in that and (to have faith) that He, –The Blessed– possesses beautiful names and lofty attributes. He has no likeness, he has no equal and he has no rival as He said:

وَلِلَّهِ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ فَادْعُوهُ بِهَا

"And (all) the Most Beautiful Names belong to Allah, so call on Him by them"  
[Sūratul-A'rāf, verse: 180].

And He, The Blessed said:

هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْمَلِكُ الْقُدُّوسُ السَّلَامُ الْمُؤْمِنُ الْمُهَيْمِنُ الْعَزِيزُ  
الْجَبَّارُ الْمُتَكَبِّرُ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ

"He is Allah than Whom there is La ilaha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He) the King, the Holy, the One Free from all defects, the Giver of security, the Watcher over His creatures, the All-Mighty, the



Compeller, the Supreme. Glory be to Allah! (High is He) above all that they associate as partners with Him."

هُوَ اللَّهُ الْخَالِقُ الْبَارِئُ الْمُصَوِّرُ لَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَى يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ مَا فِي  
السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

"He is Allah, the Creator, the Inventor of all things, the Bestower of forms. To Him belong the Best Names. All that is in the heavens and the earth glorify Him. And He is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise."  
[Sūratul-Hashr, verse: 23–24].

It is compulsory to have faith in these names and their meanings, to Him belong the beautiful names and their meanings. He is the possessor of mercy, the possessor of knowledge, the possessor of power, the possessor of might, the possessor of patience.

### **The names have meanings:**

Ar-Rahmān, its meaning is: (the possessor of) Mercy.  
And Al-Ilāh, its meaning is: He is the Ilah (the one deserving of worship) of the creatures and their Deity.

And Al-Azīz, its meaning is: the Powerful that is not subdued rather He has subdued everything.

And Ar-Rahīm means the one who has spacious mercy.

And Al-Hakīm means the one that possesses wisdom. He does not do anything for mere play or for no tangible reason. Rather, everything (He does) is with wisdom, not mere play.

And likewise, He is Al-'Alīm: The one that knows everything and nothing is hidden from Him. Etc.  
These are the three categories of Tawhīd.

The presenter: May Allāh be good to you and bless you, O virtuous Shaikh.

Translated by:  
Lukmān Bn Abdir-Raūf As-Salafi

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